BOOK REVIEWS

ELISEO "CHEO" TORRES AND TIMOTHY L. SAWYER, JR. 2005. **Curandero: A Life in Mexican Folk Healing.** (ISBN 0-8263-3640-x, pbk.). University of New Mexico Press, 1312 Basehart Rd. SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106-4363, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.unmpress.com, 1-800-249-7737). \$14.95, 170 pp., b/w illustrations, 5 1/2" × 8".

I first became interested in herbal medicine while listening to my mother's stories about our foremothers' skillful use of medicinal plants. These grandmothers and the local curanderos were the main sources of medical care for families living on the remote ranches of South Texas and Northern Mexico. The personalized stories in Dr. Torres's book resonate with the common culture of Southwestern Mexican-American traditional folk medicine, or curanderismo. Chapter 10 "How I Was Fed and Healed by Plants" is an account of the herbal wisdom of Dr. Torres's mother that brought back many memories. Dr. Torres's mother grew medicinal plants in old coffee cans that were handed out freely to sick friends and family, as did my own grandmother. Through my mother I was already familiar with one of the legendary healers profiled in this book, Don Pedrito Jaramillo, a folk saint whose tombstone near Falfurrias, Texas, reads "The Benefactor of Humanity."

Reading *Curandero* has been both a pleasure and an education. Although it is not intended to be a scientific ethnobotanical text, this book does much to promote cultural literacy and understanding of a beloved folk medicine system that exists in various forms throughout the Southwestern United States. Curanderismo incorporates elements of European and Arabic medicine brought over from the Old World with elements of Native American traditional medicine. The personalized stories about the practitioners of curanderismo, the curanderos, allow the reader to understand this form of folk medicine from within the culture. Dr. Torres is an expert who teaches summer courses on curanderismo at the University of New Mexico. This book would make useful reading for anyone interested in herbal and folk medicine, as well as for researchers and healthcare professionals interested in learning more about a form of traditional medicine that incorporates spirituality and the mind with healing.—Marissa N. Oppel, MS, Coordinator, Science Learning Laboratories, Biology Department, El Centro College, Dallas, Texas 75202, U.S.A.

L. Katherine Kirkman, Claud L. Brown, and Donald J. Leopold. 2007. **Native Trees of the Southeast: An Identification Guide.** (ISBN 13: 978-0-88192-828-0, pbk.). Timber Press, Inc., 133 S.W. Second Avenue, Suite 450, Portland, Oregon 97204-3527, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.timberpress.com, orders@timberpress.com, 1-800-827-5622). \$34.95, 370 pp., numerous drawings, maps, images, keys, 6.25" × 9.25".

Contents.—Preface; Acknowledgments; Introduction; Categories of plant classification; Scientific and common names; How to use the keys; Identification features of trees; Tree diversity of southeastern forests; Summer keys to trees; Winter keys to flowering trees; [Descriptions of 44 plant families]; Some common introduced and naturalized trees in the Southeast; Glossary; Conversion tables; Bibliography; Index.

This book, *Native Trees of the Southeast:* An *Identification Guide*, is divided into sections by family. The authors include a detailed introduction that provides the reader with their specific definition of a tree and information on how to use keys and features to identify trees. The authors' use of line drawings helps to clearly explain the diversity of tree anatomy, specifically concerning leaves and branches. A winter and summer key were included and will aide the reader in identifying any species during any season of the year.

I found this book to be very informative and a good source for any amateur or avid outdoorsman. The authors used both common and scientific names in their description of each species. They provide a simple ruler on the back cover of the book to aide in field measurements for identification to species. The inclusion of a winter and summer key was a great addition. The authors used easy to understand terms in each key for defining the specific parts of a tree. I found the images and maps to be very useful, except I would suggest that at least one image or line drawing be included for each species. The book's size and weight make it an ideal companion for any hiker or outdoorsman.—Keri McNew, MS Biology, Project Manager, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 500 East 4th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4025, U.S.A.